

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1618

INFO USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 3472

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OEXC, CZ

SUBJECT: NOMINATION FOR PARTIAL IV GRANT -- MILAN RESSEL

STATE FOR CU/EE; USIA FOR IEU

1. EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO NOMINATE MILAN RESSEL, A WELL-KNOWN CZECHOSLOVAK ARTIST, WHO WILL BE VISITING THE UNITED STATES AT HIS OWN EXPENSE, FOR A PARTIAL INTERNATIONAL VISITOR'S GRANT DURING PERIOD DECEMBER 15-JANUARY 13, 1977. EXPENSES CAN BE CHARGED AGAINST POST'S FY 77 COUNTRY BUDGET ALLOCATION.

2. RESSEL IS ONE OF THE BEST-KNOWN ARTISTS OF HIS GENERATION, ALTHOUGH, IN FACT, HE CANNOT EXHIBIT LOCALLY AT PRESENT, OWING TO GOC POLICIES.

3. HE IS PAYING HIS OWN WAY TO AND FROM THE UNITED STATES, AND WILL SPEND PART OF HIS TRAVEL TIME WITH PROF. CALVIN MORGAN, DEPARTMENT OF THEATER AND FILM, DENISON UNIVERSITY, GRANVILLE, OHIO. MORGAN CAN BE CONTACTED FOR ANY FURTHER DETAILS OF RESSEL'S TRIP, AND THE NECESSARY TRAVEL DOCUMENTS, TICKETS, ETC., SHOULD BE SENT TO MORGAN, WHO WILL MEET RESSEL'S ARRIVAL FLIGHT IN NEW YORK DECEMBER 15. RESSEL WILL ARRIVE ON PAN AM FLIGHT 073, WHICH LEAVES FRANKFURT AT 1355 GMT THAT DAY. PLEASE ASK NEW YORK RECEPTION CENTER TO MEET AND ASSIST.

4. EMBASSY PROPOSES A PROGRAM ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES:
DECEMBER 15-20 - NEW YORK CITY; DECEMBER 21-JANUARY 1 - PRIVATE TRAVEL FROM NEW YORK TO GRANVILLE, OHIO WITH PROF. MORGAN AND FAMILY; JANUARY 2-5 - CHICAGO; JANUARY 5-10 - SAN FRANCISCO; JANUARY 11-13 - WASHINGTON, D.C. ; JANUARY 13 - DEPARTURE FOR
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PRAGUE. GRANT SHOULD INCLUDE TRAVEL BETWEEN THESE CITIES,

EXCLUDING INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, AND HOTEL RESERVATIONS AND STANDARD GRANT PER DIEM IN CITIES COVERED BY THE GRANT.

5. IN EACH CITY, RESSEL, WHO IS FLUENT IN ENGLISH AND WHO WILL NOT NEED AN INTERPRETER, WOULD LIKE TO VISIT MUSEUMS OF MODERN ART AND GALLERIES, AND IF POSSIBLE, MEET WITH AMERICAN ARTISTS. IN CHICAGO, HE WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH JACQUES AND ANN BARUCH, WHO OPERATE THE BARUCH GALLERY, AND WHO HAVE VISITED HIM IN PRAGUE, AND IN WASHINGTON, WITH MRS. JACOB MLADEK, WHO IS WELL-KNOWN TO CZECHOSLOVAK ARTISTS, AND MRS. KAREN F. BEALL, CURATOR OF FINE PRINTS, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, WHO VISITED RESSEL'S STUDIO THIS SUMMER.

6. BORN DECEMBER 1, 1934 IN OSTRAVA, RESSEL SPENT THE 1940-45 PERIOD IN ENGLAND, WHERE HIS FATHER WAS WITH THE CZECHOSLOVAK ARMY. HE ATTENDED THE PRAGUE ART COLLEGE FROM 1953-59, AND PARTICIPATED IN GROUP EXHIBITIONS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA FROM 1953-59. HE HELD ONE-PERSON SHOWS IN BRNO (1970), OSTRAVA (1971), KRNOV (1971), AND PRAGUE (1972). HE EXHIBITED IN THE TOKYO BIENNALE OF 1972, IS REPRESENTED IN THE PERMANENT COLLECTION OF THE SCHWARZ GALLERY, MILAN, AND IN NUMEROUS OTHER WORLD COLLECTIONS.

7. RESSEL IS A DETAILED CRAFTSMAN. HIS WORKS, ON CANVASSES AS LARGE AS 150 BY 200 CMS., ARE MINUTELY SHADED PENCIL COLORED DRAWINGS, DEALING WITH SUCH THEMES AS THE WORLD OF THE FUTURE, SCIENCE FICTION, THE PROBLEMS OF THE ENVIRONMENT, CITIES OF THE FUTURE, TECHNOLOGY, AND MODERN LIFE.

8. HE HAS NEVER BEEN TO THE UNITED STATES.

9. RESSEL IS AN OUTSTANDING REPRESENTATIVE OF A GENERATION OF ARTISTS OF HIGH PROFESSIONAL ABILITY WHO ARE INFREQUENTLY ACCORDED LOCAL RECOGNITION AND RARELY ALLOWED TO TRAVEL OUT OF THE COUNTRY. CONTACT WITH THIS AUDIENCE IS IMPORTANT TO THE EMBASSY, BUT NOT EASY TO ACHIEVE. RESSEL HAS WIDE CONTACTS AMONG YOUNG CZECHS, AND IS A RESPECTED AND INFLUENTIAL FIGURE IN LOCAL NON-OFFICIAL CULTURAL CIRCLES.

10. WE REGRET THAT IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO MAKE THIS NOMINATION CONFIDENTIAL

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EARLIER, BUT THE EMBASSY HAS JUST LEARNED THE GOC HAS GIVEN RESSEL PERMISSION TO TRAVEL. WE ALSO REALIZE THAT THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS NOT THE BEST FOR SUCH PLANNING, BUT KNOW THAT RESSEL WILL APPRECIATE ANYTHING THE DEPARTMENT CAN ORGANIZE. PAO DISCUSSED GRANT WITH CU/EE DIRECTOR YALE RICHMOND DURING LATTER'S RECENT CONSULTATIONS IN PRAGUE.

11. PLEASE INFORM EMBASSY OF GRANT DETAILS BY DECEMBER 14.

BYRNE

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